

References

Matthew 27:15–66;
Mark 15:6–47;
Luke 23:13–56;
John 18:39–19:42;
The Desire of Ages, pp. 731–764



Memory Verse

“ ‘For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life’ ” (John 3:16, NIV).

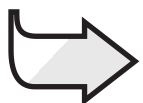


Objectives

The children will:
Know that the death of Jesus demonstrates God’s great love for us.

Feel overwhelming gratitude to Jesus, the only One who can save us.

Respond by accepting Jesus as their personal Saviour.



The Message

I want Jesus to be my personal Saviour.

For Me!

Monthly Theme

We remember what Jesus has done for us.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

Pilate finds Jesus innocent again—after He is brought back from Herod. He tells the crowd that he will have Jesus flogged and then will release Him. The crowd demands that Jesus be killed and Barabbas be released. Pilate submits to their demands and turns Jesus over to be crucified. Barabbas is released, and Jesus is beaten and led to Golgotha. He cannot carry His cross all the way, so Simon of Cyrene is forced to do so. Jesus is nailed to the cross and hangs between two thieves. One of them asks Jesus to remember him when He comes in His kingdom, and Jesus promises that He will. Jesus dies of a broken heart because of the pain of the world’s sin. Jesus’ friends bury Him before Sabbath in Joseph’s tomb.

This is a lesson about worship.

Words cannot express the torture and anguish that Jesus suffered as He died for us, alone. His supreme gift of Himself has inspired believers throughout the centuries to worship Him, to express gratitude by words and deeds, and to accept Him into their lives as their personal Saviour.

Teacher Enrichment

“Both Joseph and Nicodemus had been intentionally excluded from the Sanhedrin trials of Jesus, for in times past they had spoken in Jesus’ favor and thwarted plans to silence the Saviour. . . . Now they boldly stepped forward to do what no other friends of Jesus were in a position to do. In the crucifixion Nicodemus witnessed the fulfillment of what Jesus had said three years before concerning the lifting up of the Son of Man (John 3:14, 15), and to him the vivid scenes of this day constituted positive evidence of Christ’s divinity” (*The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, pp. 550, 551).

Room Decorations

See Lesson 1.

Program Overview

Lesson Section	Minutes	Activities	Materials Needed
Welcome	ongoing	Greet students at door; hear pleased/troubled	none
1 Readiness Options	up to 10	<i>A. Making a Cross</i> <i>B. Thorns</i> <i>C. Hanging on a Cross</i>	wood or cardboard for making a large cross, paper for a sign, markers branch from a bush or plant with thorns none
Any Time Prayer and Praise*	up to 10	Fellowship Songbook Mission Offering Prayer	none <i>Sing for Joy</i> <i>Children's Mission</i> offering container cross cutouts (see p. 150), pencils, pens
2 Bible Lesson	up to 20	Experiencing the Story Memory Verse Bible Study	log or wood about 6' (2 meters) long, large nail, hammer, several layers of heavy cloth song, "John 3:16" (<i>Sing for Joy</i> , No. 24) Bibles
3 Applying the Lesson	up to 15	<i>I Want Him!</i>	the word <i>love</i> written for all to see, pencils, pens, markers, small blank card for each child, tape, cross from Readiness A or make one (see activity)
4 Sharing the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Keeping Him!</i>	Jesus stickers (optional), John 3:16 written for all to see, construction paper, pencils, markers, crayons, glue, life preserver pattern (see p. 151), scissors

*Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.

TEACHING THE LESSON

Welcome

Welcome students at the door. Ask how their week has been—what they are pleased/troubled about. Encourage them to share any experiences from last week's lesson study. Then have them begin the readiness activity of your choice.



Readiness Activities

Select the activity most appropriate for your situation.

You Need:

- wood or cardboard for making a large cross 5 or 6 feet (2 1/2 to 3 meters) tall
- paper for a sign
- markers

A. Making a Cross

Have the children make a large cross from either wood or cardboard. Have them write the notice that soldiers prepared and fastened to the cross: "JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS" (John 19:19). Attach the notice on the upper part of the cross. Keep the cross for "Applying the Lesson."

Debriefing

Say: **Last week we studied about Jesus' suffering. This week we will learn about His death on the cross.** Ask: **What feelings do you get when you think of Jesus on the cross?** (sadness, sorrow for my sins, feeling sorry for Jesus) **It is hard to think of Jesus dying on the cross. It can even make us feel afraid. Jesus was willing to die for us because He loves us. One way we can respond to His love is by asking Him to be our personal Saviour. That's what our message says:**



I WANT JESUS TO BE MY PERSONAL SAVIOUR.

If you really mean it, say that with me.

You Need:

- branch from a bush or plant with thorns

B. Thorns

Have the children touch the thorns. Have them press the thorns against their skin.

Debriefing

Ask: **How do thorns feel?** (sharp) **What would happen if we pressed the thorns real hard against our skin?** (They would hurt us.) **What happens if the skin breaks?** (We bleed.) **The Bible tells us that cruel soldiers made a crown of thorns and pressed it on Jesus' head. Thorns were part of Jesus' suffering on the way to the cross to die for us. In dying for us, Jesus offered Himself as our Saviour. Saying today's message is one way to respond to His love. Listen to it.**



I WANT JESUS TO BE MY PERSONAL SAVIOUR.

If you really mean it, say that with me.

C. Hanging on a Cross

Have the children stand. Ask them to hold out both arms a little above shoulder height, elbows straight. Have them hold out their arms for as long as they can.

Debriefing

Ask: **How long do you think you held your arms up?** (Wait for response.) **How do your muscles feel when they begin to be tired?** (They hurt.) **Jesus was in that position for many hours, held by nails through His wrists and feet. He suffered because of our sins. Jesus was willing to do so because He loves us. One way we can respond to His love is to remember today's message.**



I WANT JESUS TO BE MY PERSONAL SAVIOUR.

If you really mean it, say that with me.

Prayer and Praise

**Any
Time**



Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). Allow time for sharing experiences from last week's lesson study and review the memory verse. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special warm greeting to all visitors.



Suggested Songs

- "I Have Decided to Follow Jesus" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 119)
- "Jesus Loves Me/O, How He Loves You and Me" (*Sing for Joy*, Nos. 27, 28)
- "God Is So Good" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 13)
- "Into My Heart" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 125)



Mission

Share a story from *Children's Mission*.



Offering

Say: **Our offering goes to help the people in (name of place where offering will go) to learn about Jesus and accept Him as their personal Saviour.**

You Need:

- offering container from last week



Prayer

In advance, prepare a cutout of a cross for each child (see page 150). Say: **Jesus suffered and died so that everyone who chooses to be saved may have eternal life. However, some people don't want Jesus' gift of eternal life. Can you think of anyone like that?** (Wait for response.) **Write that person's name on your cross cutout. Let's kneel now and pray that the people whose names are on your crosses will open their hearts and want Jesus to be their personal Saviour.** Encourage the children to pray aloud. Then close with a prayer that each child will want Jesus to be their personal Saviour.

You Need:

- cross cutouts (see p. 150)
- pens, pencils

Bible Lesson

You Need:

- log or piece of wood about 6' (2 meters) long
- large nail
- hammer
- several layers of heavy cloth

Experiencing the Story

Be ready to follow the directions included as you read or tell the story. For best results, review the story before class.

Read or tell the story.

"I have examined this man, and He is innocent!" Pilate argued. "I will have Him flogged; then I will release Him."

A great roar rose from the crowd. "Kill Him! Kill Him! Release Barabbas to us!" The crowd shouted louder and louder.

It was the custom to release a prisoner during the Passover season. The crowd was demanding that a terrible criminal be set free and that innocent Jesus be put to death.

Pilate was the ruler. But he was afraid of the people. And at last he let them have their way. He knew that Jesus was not guilty of any crime, but he turned Him over to the mob. And he let Barabbas out of prison.

Thousands of people lined both sides of the road as Jesus staggered under the weight of His cross. *[Allow the children to take turns trying to carry the log or wood on their shoulders.]* Most people shouted and jeered at Jesus. His friends and followers wept and wailed.

Finally Jesus fell down. He had no strength left after being beaten. The soldiers grabbed a strong-looking man who was standing nearby. A stranger in Jerusalem, Simon, a tourist from the town of Cyrene, was forced to carry Jesus' cross.

They reached the place called Calvary—the place where criminals were put to death. The soldiers pushed Jesus roughly down on the cross. They pounded long iron spikes through his wrists and His feet. *[Hold up the large nail*

and hammer. Ask: What would it be like to have a large nail hammered through your wrists and feet?] Then they lifted the cross and dropped the bottom of it into a hole in the ground so it would stand upright. The pain was terrible. Crucifixion was the most painful and cruel way the Romans knew to put someone to death. But Jesus prayed, "Father, forgive these people. They don't know what they are doing."

The crowd watched as the leaders made fun of Jesus. "He saved other people, but He can't save Himself!" they jeered. The soldiers made fun of Jesus too. They made a sign and nailed it to the cross above His head. "This is the King of the Jews!" the sign declared.

Two thieves were crucified along with Jesus that day. One of the men mocked Him. "So You're the Messiah! Prove it by saving Yourself and us too!"

The other thief responded. "We deserve to die," he protested, "but this Man has not done anything wrong!" He turned to Jesus and said, "Remember me when You come into Your kingdom."

And Jesus promised him that He would.

At noon, a deep darkness fell over the land. The light from the sun completely disappeared. The darkness lasted until 3 o'clock when Jesus cried, "Father, I entrust My spirit into Your hands!" and He died.

When Jesus died, the earth shook. At the same time the curtain in the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. Only God or His angels could have ripped that curtain. *[Have the children try to tear the layers of heavy cloth.]*

The Roman soldiers were amazed that Jesus had died so quickly. But it was not the horrible pain of crucifixion that had killed Him. The weight of all the sins of all the world had been laid on Jesus—every sin that ever was done, and every sin that ever will be done. Jesus died of

a broken heart. It was our sins that killed Him. He died in our place.

A good man named Joseph went to Pilate and asked for Jesus' body. Joseph put His body in a new tomb that had been carved out of a rock, the very tomb that Joseph had planned to be buried in one day. A large stone was rolled in place to seal the tomb.

It was very late Friday afternoon. All was quiet at last.

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask: **What custom was observed during Passover each year?** (The government would release a prisoner.) **Whom did Pilate release from prison?** (Barabbas)

Why did Simon of Cyrene carry Jesus' cross? (The soldiers made him. Jesus stumbled because He was weak.)

What happened to the curtains in the temple? (They were torn from top to bottom.) **Who took Jesus' body and where did he put it?** (Joseph; he put Jesus' body in the new tomb he had built for himself.)

Why did Jesus go through this terrible experience? (Because He loves us and wants to save us.) **Jesus died for our sins, so that one day we can be together with Him, and there will be no more sadness or death. If you love Him, say our message with me.**



I WANT JESUS TO BE MY PERSONAL SAVIOUR.

Memory Verse

Use the song "John 3:16" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 24) to teach the memory verse. Sing the song several times throughout

today's program until the children know it well. Each time, remind the children that Jesus is our Life Saver.

You Need:

- song, "John 3:16" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 24)

Bible Study

Have good readers take turns reading Luke 23:26-49.

Say: **Let's travel the road to Calvary, the way of the cross. Choose the best answer for each question.** Read each question aloud. Ask for volunteers to read the Bible reference and give the right answer.

1. Simon of Cyrene was made to carry the cross of Jesus. (Luke 23:26)
True or False?
2. What did the women do for Jesus? (Luke 23:27)
a. They laughed at Him. b. They spat at Him. c. They wept for Him.
3. How many thieves were crucified with Jesus? (Luke 23:32)
a. three, b. two, c. one
4. Who was the last person Jesus promised to save? (Luke 23:39-43)
a. Simon of Cyrene, b. a soldier, c. the thief on the cross
5. What came over the whole land for three hours? (Luke 23:44)
a. rain, b. sunlight, c. darkness
6. What were Jesus' last words before He died? (Luke 23:46)
a. "I thirst." b. "Father, into your hands I commit My spirit." c. "Father, forgive them."

Debriefing

Ask: **What part of Jesus' crucifixion story means the most to you?** (Accept responses.) **What do you think about the things Jesus suffered for you?** (I am overwhelmed; I could never do what He did and not give up. I'm not worth it. I want to accept what He did for me with gratitude.) **Was His suffering in vain? Why? If you really mean it, say our message with me.**



I WANT JESUS TO BE MY PERSONAL SAVIOUR.

You Need:

- Bibles

Applying the Lesson

You Need:

- the word *love* written for all to see
- pencils, pens, markers
- small blank card for each child
- tape
- cross from Readiness A or make one (see activity)

I Want Him!

Allow response time as you ask:

What do you think of when you hear the word love? (giving, caring, feeling good, etc.) Say the memory verse together.

Ask: **What makes God's love even more special than the love we get from others?** (God gave Jesus to die for us. He loves all people—even if they don't love Him.)

Would you like to ask Jesus today to be your best friend and your Saviour? Give each child who says yes a small card. Have them write their name on the card and tape their card to the cross made in Readiness A. (If you did not use Readiness A, make a cross and place it where the children can reach it.) As the children come to the cross, sing together "God Is So Good" (*Sing for Joy*,

No. 13) with the following words:

God is so good,
He died for me,
He is my friend,
And I love Him so.

Debriefing

Allow response time as you say:

When you ask Jesus to be your best friend and your Saviour, you are accepting Jesus as your personal Saviour.

Ask: **Why do you want Jesus to be your personal Saviour? When you accept Jesus as your personal Saviour, how do you think Jesus feels? How do you feel?**

If you really mean it, let's say our message again:



I WANT JESUS TO BE MY PERSONAL SAVIOUR.

Sharing the Lesson

Keeping Him!

Say: **When you accept Jesus as your personal Saviour, it is important to tell Him so each day. To keep close to Him, do the following** (write on the board as you say):

1. **Talk to Him.**
2. **Read His Word, the Bible.**
3. **Share the story of Jesus with someone else.**

Let's do each of these three things now. Right now let's say a silent prayer, telling Jesus how much we love Him, and thanking Him for dying on the cross. Allow time.

Now, let's say (or read) John 3:16. Allow time.

Let's make a memory verse poster to give to someone.

Help the children make a memory verse poster. Provide the supplies and a copy of the life preserver pattern (see page 151) for each child. Have them write the memory verse on the life preserver, cut it out, and glue it to the construction paper to make a poster. Add Jesus stickers or decorate the poster as desired.

Say: **As you give this poster to someone, say your memory verse for them.**

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask: **Do you enjoy talking to Jesus? Why?**

What do you think about the Bible? (It has many good stories; I don't understand it all; It tells me how to live; It teaches me about Jesus and God.)

Even if you don't understand everything in the Bible, you can enjoy and thank Jesus for what you do understand. You will learn more later.

To whom will you give your "Life Preserver" poster? What will you tell them? Let's say our message together one more time:



I WANT JESUS TO BE MY PERSONAL SAVIOUR.

Closing

Sing "Into My Heart" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 125) as the closing prayer.

Remind the children to use their Bible Study Guides every day and to do the daily activities.

You Need:

- scissors
- life preserver pattern (see p. 151)
- Jesus stickers (optional)
- John 3:16 written for all to see
- construction paper
- pencils, markers, crayons
- glue

For Me!

References

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The Desire of Ages,
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Memory Verse

“ ‘For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life’ ” (John 3:16, NIV).

The Message

I want Jesus to be my personal Saviour.

Who is your best friend? Would you be willing to suffer to help that friend? Is there anyone you don't like? Would you do whatever it takes to help that person if they were in trouble? I know someone who would answer "Yes!" to both questions. He suffered and died in our place to save everyone. Let's read His story.

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The earth shook. The curtain in the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. Only God or His angels could have ripped the thick curtain!

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Pilate and asked for Jesus' body. Joseph put Jesus' body in a new tomb. One that had been carved out of a rock. The very tomb that Joseph had had made for himself. A big stone was rolled in place to seal the tomb.

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Daily Activities

Sabbath

- Go for a walk with your family. How many trees can you find and identify? One Bible writer says that Jesus bore our sins "on the tree." (See 1 Peter 2:24.) What does that mean?
- Sit under a tree and read your Bible story together. Sing "The Old Rugged Cross" before prayer. Thank Jesus for suffering for you.
- Why was Jesus willing to suffer so much? Read John 3:16 together. What does that mean to you?

Sunday

- Have an ongoing "Bible race" all week to answer a daily question. See who can find the text and answer first. Today's question: What did Pilate say to the priests and rulers about Jesus? (Luke 23:14–16)
- Tape sheets of blank paper together in the shape of a cross. Make a picture of Pilate, Jesus, and the chief priests and rulers on the top sheet. Each day you will add a picture to this cross.
- Say your memory verse for your family before prayer. As you pray, ask Jesus to forgive your sins.

Monday

- Today's "Bible race" question for family worship is: Who helped Jesus by carrying the cross? (Mark 15:21) On your cross shape, draw a picture of him carrying Jesus' cross. Then thank Jesus for people who help you with hard things.
- Read or listen to your memory verse in another Bible version. How is it different? How is it the same?
- Sing "Wide, Wide as the Ocean" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 32).

Tuesday

- Have your family answer the following: How many hours did Jesus hang on the cross? (Mark 15:25, 33) The "third hour" is 9 a.m.

Find 9 a.m. on a clock. What time is the sixth hour? What time is the ninth hour?

- How much time do you spend in worshipping Jesus each day? Keep track for one week, then share it with your family.
- On your cross shape, draw a picture of Jesus on the cross. Then thank Him for dying for you.
- Say or sing your memory verse with your family.

Wednesday

- Ask your family today's question: What kind of drink was offered to Jesus? Why? (John 1:28, 29) On your cross shape make a picture of soldiers giving that drink to Jesus.
- Ask an adult to pour some vinegar into a glass. Taste it. Would you want that to help you ease pain? Thank Jesus for today's medicines and doctors.
- Say your memory verse. Then sing "John 3:16" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 24) together.

Thursday

- Today's Bible race question is: What other things happened when Jesus died? (Matthew 27:50–52) Draw a picture of each on your cross shape.
- Find out what usually causes an earthquake. Pray for victims of such disasters.
- Say your memory verse together. Who is "whoever"?

Friday

- Ask your family: Why do you think the curtain of the temple was torn in two? (Hebrews 9:12) (See also *The Desire of Ages*, p. 757.)
- Use your cross-shape pictures to tell this week's Bible story to your family. Afterward, sing songs about Jesus' cross.
- Ask each family member to write your memory verse on a paper heart. Say: Write your name in place of the words "world" and "whoever."
- Thank Jesus for His love. Tell Him that you believe in Him, that you want Him to be your personal Saviour.